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Collaborative Practice

~ Likorall ~

The Lift System of the Future

by: Eva Ebner R.N.

I am writing this article due to the continued rise of back injuries to the hospital staff across the US from lifting patients, or trying to prevent them from getting injured when walking them and the patient loses their balance, and all you have to hang on to them is a gait belt. I know there still will be times that we will have to use gait belts, to walk or transfer patients. This type of lift system or something like it can greatly reduce the amount of back injuries in the healthcare field.

The hospital in Sabetha, Kansas recently opened a new care wing. When planning the wing they incorporated a new lift system, which is being used widely throughout the world. This lift system is in all patient rooms, to assist with transfers to and from the bed to a chair, wheelchair, or a stretcher. This was to help prevent injuries to the staff and patients. This hospital is not the only one, there are several throughout the state that have incorporated different forms of this lift system in their facility. This is how hospitals are trying to make the work place safer reduce the back related injuries. This also prevents injuries and falls to patients during their hospital stay.

The one we have works off of an H-track; it can be utilized by one staff. It consists of two H-beams that run parallel across the room and the beam containing the motorized lift glides across them as tracks. There are slings that are placed under the patient to secure the patient during the transfer. They are connected to a plastic part that looks like a hanger that hangs down from the lift by a nylon strap about three inches in width. The lift is electric and operated by remote. The lift has many different slings to help with the different tasks that it allows you to do with the patient safely. There are many different versions of this lift available. This is so that it can be utilized throughout the different areas in the hospital. These areas may include but are not limited to patient rooms, whirlpool room, and x-ray.

In the end, the use of this new lift system will greatly reduce the possibilities of back injuries, as well as the injuries that occur to the patients by using their arms to lift them up. We generally use a turn sheet to lift our light patients up in bed and turn them. It is our heavier patients that are at greate risk of injury when trying to reposition them in bed. This is where the lift will be of most benefit.